

expenses, and they will invest. It is very important. It also helps consumers by allowing them to have a lower tax rate. It accelerates tax reduction that has already been passed by this Congress. It puts it into law, though, in the year 2003 instead of phasing it in over time.

This bill also allows reductions in the capital gains tax. If one sells something and they can keep more of their money, then obviously they are going to be more inclined to sell something. That is a novel concept in Washington, but back home people understand if I sell something, I have got more money in my pocket; it is a good deal. And the best part is less money will go to Washington bureaucracies which are just going to grow the government and reduce our personal freedom.

This jobs package has already passed the House. It just recently passed the other body. Now it is headed towards the Conference Committee. I hope we can get this thing done by the end of the week because folks back home in Georgia, and I am sure it is true in California and New York and Maine and all over this great country, they need jobs, they need work, they need it today. Let us pass this bill.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLE). Pursuant to rule XX, proceedings on the remaining postponed questions will resume tomorrow.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GUTKNECHT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CONSOLIDATION OF THE MEDIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw to the attention of the Members of the House an action that is about to be taken by the Federal Communications Commission. On June 2,

the FCC is going to act on a ruling which in all likelihood will be passed by a vote of three to two, two members of the commission voting against it and three voting for it.

This is a resolution that will continue a process that has been going on in our country now for a number of years. That process is the consolidation of the media, the means of communication in our Nation, the consolidation of that media into the hands of fewer and fewer people.

I think that many people across the country have noticed that in towns and small cities all across America, radio stations that used to be competing with each other and in doing so paid attention to issues that were taking place at the local level, community events, and also concentrating on local news that those radio stations now are not competing with each other but in fact they are owned by the same entity and often they are owned by a corporation that is not even located in that city. Often that corporation is located thousands of miles away and the broadcasting on those stations is actually piped in from distances and has no relationship whatsoever to what is going on in that town or in that city.

This consolidation, I think, is acting contrary to the best interests of the country; and I think it is also quite clearly acting contrary to the Federal communications law of 1934 which stipulated by the Congress that we ought to have in our electronic communications as much diversity of opinion as possible and that radio stations and then later television stations ought to in large measure reflect what is going on in the individual communities where those radio and television stations are located.

Increasingly, that is not the case. Increasingly, we are seeing the homogenization of content on radio and on television particularly. We are also noticing that radio stations are now beginning to charge communications companies and artists to have their artwork, their songs, their music played over those radio stations. That in and of itself may be running afoul of existing law.

There is also, of course, a growing concern about the availability of actual news and information as it is being handled and consolidated by these individual corporations. Suddenly, groups as well as individuals across the country are becoming concerned about this phenomenon, and those groups are very diverse and represent a very broad spectrum of the American people.

Let me give just a couple of examples. Just recently the National Rifle Association became aware of this ruling of the Federal Communications Commission which is pending and which will be acted upon on June 2. The NRA has come out against this ruling, stipulating that they believe that this ruling is not in the best interest of the American people, not in the

best interest of this Republic and not in the best interest of our democratic principles.

Also, the National Council of Catholic Bishops has come out against this ruling. They have come out against it for a slightly different reason. They have noticed that as we have seen the consolidation of media in America, in other words, radio stations and TV stations owned by big corporations and not reflecting the needs of the local community, that in addition to that we have seen a dumbing down of the programming that is being broadcast over radio and television and that often they are observing that the content is becoming lowbrow and demeaning and low grade and base, and they are deeply concerned about the kind of television broadcasting that young people particularly are being exposed to as a result of the fact that more and more of our television stations and radio stations are owned by these major corporations that have no interest whatsoever in the type of content they are broadcasting or the effect that content is having on the people in those communities.

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So the National Council of Catholic Bishops has come out opposed to this ruling and also the largest organization of television viewers. This organization represents about 750,000 television viewers across the country and has also come out against this ruling, which is pending on the 2nd of June.

I have introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives, and this resolution calls upon the House to notify the FCC that we want this process stopped. Already we have 96 cosponsors of this resolution, and I am inviting other Members of the House to join us. It is quite clear that the action proposed by the FCC is not in the interests of the country, and it is being opposed by a growing segment of the American community across a very wide spectrum. Please come and join us on this resolution.

TRIBUTE TO APACHE FIREFIGHTER RICK LUPE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, last summer Arizona saw the most devastating fire of the 2002 fire season, the Rodeo-Chedeski Fire. The fire burned 500,000 acres of land and destroyed over 400 homes and millions of dollars worth of property.

Fortunately, due to the efforts of Apache firefighter Rick Lupe, 42, the towns of Show Low, Pinetop, Lakeside, Honda, Whiteriver and others narrowly escaped the same fate as those seared by the Rodeo-Chedeski fire.

Rick, in charge of a division of men, worked to halt the eastward expansion